

# AMELIA R ANNE AND THE GREEN UMBRELLA



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# AMELIARANNE AND THE GREEN UMBRELLA

*Told by Constance Howard  
and pictured by . . . . .  
Susan Beatrice Pearson*



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HER name was Ameliaranne Stiggins. She was a pale child with black hair, which she wore in curl rags from Friday night till Sunday morning.







Her mother was poor and took in  
washing.









Because, besides Ameliaranne, who was the eldest, there were five other little Stigginses to feed.

Now, it happened one day just before Christmas that the five little Stigginses had colds in their heads, so Mrs Stiggins sat them in a ring in the kitchen with their feet in the middle in a tub of mustard and water.









After that she put them into the big  
bed and gave them hot gruel to drink ;







While Ameliaranne stood gloomily by and shook her head, which was covered with curl rags. The reason for the curl rags was that all the village children had been invited to a grand tea-party at the Squire's the next day ; and Ameliaranne was gloomy because it did not seem as if the five little Stigginses would be able to go.







Sure enough the next day the colds were worse, and at three o'clock in the afternoon Ameliaranne's hair was taken out of the rags, and she put on her Sunday dress and coat and hat, and started off to the tea-party with twenty - five ringlets bobbing about round her neck.









And the five little Stigginses sat up in  
the big bed and howled horribly with  
disappointment.







But Ameliaranne had hardly got out of the front door before she was back again. "I want the umberella," she said, and she took it from the corner in the parlour where it lived. It was large and green, with a goose's head for a handle.







“It’s never going to rain, Ameliaranne,” said Mrs Stiggins. “Whatever do you want to take the umberella for I don’t know.” But Ameliaranne tossed her head and said she wasn’t so sure about the rain, and she started off again with the green umbrella clasped in one hand.









The Squire was a jolly old man with  
a round red face and a white beard  
like Father Christmas.







But the Squire's sister, Miss Josephine, was a cross old maid, and she thought it was a stupid thing to give a tea-party to the village children. She was always there to see that they behaved themselves.







Now Miss Josephine's eagle eye was upon Ameliaranne as she took her seat at the great long table with the other children, and — "AMELIYA ANNE STIGGINS!" she said, "what are you doing with that great umbrella in here? You ought to have left it in the hall with your coat and hat."









“ Oh, nothing, please, mum,” stammered Ameliaranne, turning as red as a boiled lobster and trying to hide the umbrella under the table ; and Miss Josephine stared very hard at her and then went on to find fault with somebody else.







What a tea that was ! There were cakes with pink icing and cherries on the top, and jam tarts that melted in one's mouth, and biscuits with creamy insides, and scones, and buns.







Ameliaranne seemed to be terribly hungry, for her plate was nearly always empty ; but, though she did not reach out and help herself, she was never allowed to wait long, because there were a great many smiling maids to pass the cakes and fill up the tea-cups.









When tea was over the children went back to the hall and put on their hats and coats, and as they went out a smart footman at the door gave each child an orange, an apple, and a bag of sweets.







Ameliaranne was the last to leave, because her hat had fallen down off the peg where she had hung it and was only found after all the other children had gone.







She took her orange and apple and bag of sweets from the smart footman and said : “ Thank you, sir,” and was just ready to go out through the door, when suddenly.











Miss Josephine stepped forward.  
“AMELIYA ANNE STIGGINS!”  
she said, “I will put up your umbrella  
for you,” and she took it firmly out  
of Ameliaranne’s hand.







“ Oh, mum ! ” cried Ameliaranne, and the orange and apple and bag of sweets fell down and rolled away under the chairs, and she clutched Miss Josephine’s arm in both hands.







But Miss Josephine shook her off and held up the umbrella and fairly shot it open, and out upon the floor, in the bright light that came from the hall lamp, fell jam tarts and iced cakes and biscuits and scones.



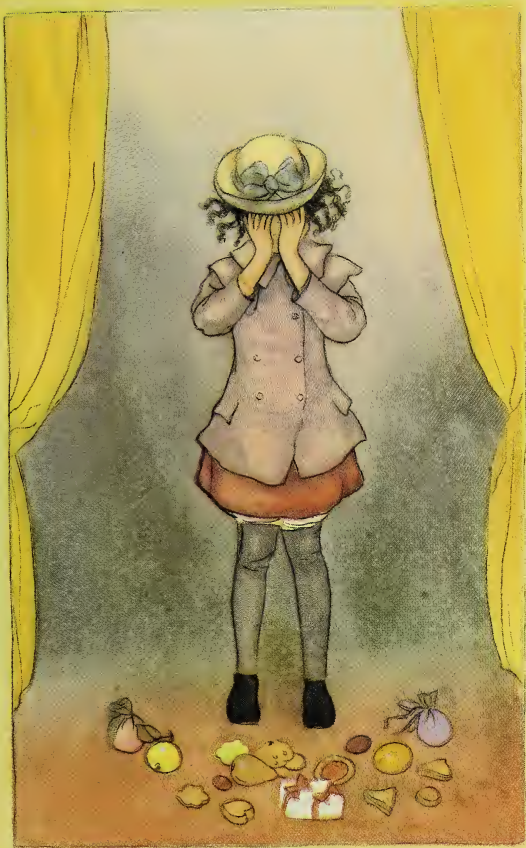




And Ameliaranne covered her face  
with her hands and wept.









“GREEDY CHILD !” said Miss Josephine, but the Squire looked down at the feast on the floor and patted Ameliaranne kindly on the shoulder. “Come, come !” he said. “It was *your own tea* you put into the umbrella. I know, because I was watching you, and you never ate anything at all.”







“ Oh, sir,” cried Ameliaranne, uncovering her face, “ I’m glad you saw, ’cos I didn’t take a bit more’n what I could easy ’ave ate ; and the five of them’s got colds in their ’eads, and when I left them they was all howlin’ somethink horful, and I couldn’t bear to go home and tell them everything and them not ’ave a bite, as you might say.”







“ Well, well ! ” said the Squire, “ I thought there was somebody missing, and of course there’ll be five teas left over, and I think we could find a sixth as this one is spoilt. John,” to the smart footman, “ a basket, please, with cakes for six people,” and John went like a shot, while Miss Josephine dropped the umbrella and walked slowly past Ameliaranne and the Squire with her nose in the air and a look of horrified disgust on her face.









In two minutes John was back again with a huge basket covered with a white cloth, and fifteen minutes later Ameliaranne staggered into the Stiggins's house and upstairs to the bedroom, with the huge basket on one arm and the green umbrella clutched in the other.







And the five little Stigginses sat up in bed with their eyes nearly starting out of their heads, and Mrs Stiggins sat bump upon a chair because she said it gave her quite a turn when Ameliaranne took the cover off the basket.







For inside that basket were cakes enough for six and Mrs Stiggins as well ; and oranges and apples and bags of sweets ; and when everybody had finished Ameliaranne was sure that she must have eaten quite twice as much as she had meant to bring home in the green umbrella.









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